



CONNECTICUT CENTER  
FOR PATIENT SAFETY  
QUALITY HEALTHCARE IS A RIGHT.

Testimony  
Public Health, March 2, 2009

Senator Harris, Representative Ritter and members of the committees

My name is Bill Tyra and I live in Trumbull. I am a retired Marine pilot and currently work with American Airlines. And most important, I am the father of a child who died in a hospital due to malpractice and to negligence. What I uncovered was cover-ups, lies and indifference to our needs and I now have great concern about the system that is in place.

I am here today to strongly object to section F in the Sustinet Bill. In one paragraph you are taking away the only course of action that is available to the consumer who is harmed. It is deeply troubling that this bill so cavalierly disregards the eighteen month study done by the HealthFirst Authority and its recommendations.

Hospitals and doctors are ill prepared to investigate the quality of medical care and demand accountability in complex events. The problems are systemic and are pervasive.

What doctors and hospitals quietly ignore is that the underlying source of the malpractice is indeed, malpractice. Every study on medical malpractice reaches the same conclusion: Preventable medical mistakes kill 100,000 Americans each year. That is more deaths than the US suffered in both the Vietnam and Korean wars. And in these same studies, it is also suggested that the actual number is much higher because many errors go simply unreported.

What this bill says is that just because a doctor is participating in the Sustinet plan, he or she is no longer accountable to the patient. That is simply outrageous and I am certain an oversight. In one paragraph, an individual's access to our courts, as so clearly written in our Constitution, is denied.

As a pilot, may I remind you that the numbers of individuals who die each day from medical error, negligence, and misdiagnosis are equal to a jumbo jet crashing for every day – all 365 days of the year. Medicine needs to do what aviation has done. Bring in outside and independently funded experts to analyze the problem and then demand change.